(b) No adverse effect on availability of cheaper drugs and medicines for common man in the country has come to the notice of this Department.

(c) In view of above, does not arise.

Custom duty on import of RBD

3229. SHRI VIJAYKUMAR RUPANI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) in view of the unprecedented rise in edible oil prices compared to that of last year, whether Government would exempt custom duty on import of RBD Palmoline Oil;

(b) if not, whether Government propose to reduce the custom duty by 40 to 50 per cent; and

(c) whether it is a fact that Government of Gujarat desires to import approximately 6000 to 7000 MTs of RBD Palmoline Oil for distribution of the same during Janmashtami and Diwali festivals to Antyodaya and BPL card holders at subsidized rates; if so, whether Government would exempt or reduce custom duty on the same as a special case?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The Government, considering the present trend in prices of edible oils, have reduced the import duty on RBD Palmolien from 67.5% to 57.5% *w.e.f.* 13.4.2007.

(c) The import of edible oils (except Coconut Oil) is under Open General Licence (OGL) and there is no import allocation from Central Government. The State Government is at liberty to import edible oil according to their requirements.

Rise in prices of pulses

3230. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been seized of the steep rise in the prices of pulses during the last two years;

(b) the details of prices as prevailed since January, 2004, month-wise;

(c) the details of estimated volume of demand of pulses *vis-a-vis* supplies during the period;